



**House Judiciary Committee
Testimony Supporting
House bills: 4201-4204
Tuesday, March 16, 2021**

Good morning Chairman Filler and Judiciary Committee members. Thank you for allowing me to speak in support of House bills 4201- 4204.

My name is Howard “Mac” Dashney, I am Senior Advisor and Legislation Chairperson of the Michigan Association for Pupil Transportation (MAPT). The Association represents the interests of Michigan’s 800 school bus fleet administrators. My purpose this morning is to speak to why HB-4201, 4202, 4203, and 4204 are so important to Michigan’s pupil transportation community.

The Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI) data¹ reported that on any school day public school and private contractor school bus fleets perform the following:

- **Field** 11,597 school buses
- **Transport** 586,243 schoolchildren
- **Provide** 1,127,486 rides to and from school per day
- **Stop** to load and unload pupils a total of 256,132 times per day

CEPI also indicated that the geographic area covered to perform these daily operations includes rural remote to city large and all areas in between.

School buses operate in a very dynamic environment whatever the geographic region or highway type. School bus fleet administrators, drivers, and staff are responsible for the health, safety, and well-being of *other peoples’* children. A school bus driver has little or no choice of the area, neighborhood, or highway condition in which he or she operates.

The mission of pupil transportation is two-fold. First, protect children and staff during the ride to and from school. This is a new phenomenon for our industry. School buses unlike school buildings cannot be “*hardened*” to protect riders and drivers from unwanted intruders. Bus drivers and passengers must be prepared to act proactively to protect themselves from any eventuality. Second, protect children as pedestrians walking to and from a school bus and the area around a school bus from motorists who violate Michigan’s school bus stop law. An

¹ Transportation Expenditure Report, SE-4094, Fiscal Year 2018-19.

Attorney General’s Opinion indicated *“The purpose of providing transportation is to help parents get their children to and from school safely and expeditiously”*.²

Accomplishing this two-fold mission requires school bus fleet administrators, drivers, and staff to create a collaborative relationship among children, parents, the motoring public, and the communities in which they operate. This involves continuous demonstration and communication of what school buses do, when they do it, how they do it, and why they do it! It is important that school bus fleet administrators, bus drivers, schoolchildren, motorists, and the community have a reliable and consistent framework in which to operate. House bills 4201, 4202, 4203, and 4204 will provide such a legal and operational context in which all can work for the protection and safety of school bus passengers and drivers.

I urge Committee members vote to move these House bills out of the Judiciary Committee with a positive recommendation.

Thank you for allowing me to speak with you today.

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² Michigan Attorney General Opinion No. 5641, January 28, 1980, SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS: Transportation of pupils, page 2.